

**ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE  
UNCORRECTED MINUTES OF MEETING ON JANUARY 16, 2003**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular meeting in the Library Auditorium at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, January 16, 2004.

Members absent and excused were Alan Blaine, Lou D'Abramo, Richard Damms, Pat Donohoe, Kristine Jacquin, Nancy McCarley, Vincent McGrath and Mark Zappi.

The member absent and unexcused was Robert Long.

The meeting was broadcast real-time over the World Wide Web. The file will be left active for a few weeks and can be reviewed by clicking on the Senate homepage at <http://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu>.

President Walter Diehl called the meeting to order.

President Diehl referred to the minutes of the November 14, 2003, Regular Meeting as distributed. Senator Wolverton moved, Senator Thaxton seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the minutes of November 14, 2003. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**GUESTS**

President Diehl introduced guests: Dr. Charles Lee, President, and Richard Heard, MSU Student Association's Director of Academic Affairs.

**CHARLES LEE, PRESIDENT**

President Lee provided the following information:

- The MSU General Faculty Meeting will be held later this month.
- For the past two years, MSU has been working toward the approval of its Mission Statement. As of yesterday, the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning's Board of Trustees approved MSU's Mission Statement.
- Just before Christmas, the Legislative Budget Committee; which is a group of legislators charged with making recommendations to the full Legislature about the needs of various state agencies, universities, community colleges, etc.; put forth their recommendation for higher education overall which amounted to a 12% reduction. For MSU, it amounts to a 14% reduction which totals approximately \$20 million of the current operating budget. Approximately \$18 million of this budget reduction is budget contingency fund money and approximately \$1 million is reduction is general funds within the Ag. units.
- Lee held budget briefings in five different communities of the state and public perception seems to be that the budgets for higher education have been cut enough and that higher education is an important part of the future of Mississippi.

- At the recent IHL Board of Trustees' meeting, budgets were discussed at both the President's level and the Board level. The university presidents seek a continuation of this year's level of funding with the addition of critically needed salary increases.
- MSU is also working on some educational and economic development initiatives, outreach, furniture purchases, technology, etc.
- Lee is encouraged by the re-appointment of Jack Gordon as the Mississippi Legislature's Senate Appropriations Committee Chair and the new appointment of Johnny W. Stringer as the House of Representative's Appropriations Committee Chair.
- Discussions are ongoing about tuition and the needs of MSU.
- Tax collections are up, but not nearly enough to accommodate all of the deficits that have been incurred in prison units and other parts of state government.
- MSU will not know the outcome pertaining to tuition until the Legislature makes its decisions about appropriations.
- Every 100 students enrolled at MSU generates approximately \$400 thousand dollars.
- Lee anticipates that the IHL Board of Trustees' staff will bring forth a recommendation that institutions only count unduplicated students. At last count, MSU only had 57 students that were considered duplicate students. This does not effect funding which is based on FTEs.
- As of December 2003, private donations totaling \$140 million were given toward the upcoming Capital Campaign.
- Dr. Vance H. Watson has been appointed as Vice President for Ag, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine.
- Yesterday, the IHL Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Ray Hayes as MSU's Vice President for Finance and Administration.
- There has been great response to the opening of the Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems (CAVS) facilities which are located in Starkville and in Canton, MS. The Mississippi Development Authority has agreed to provide an additional \$1.5 million under the existing construction contract for additions to the Starkville unit.
- The dedication of the Franklin Center for Furniture Manufacturing and Management is next Friday.
- Recently submitted are \$4 million in proposals for the Hearin Foundation in Learning Communities under Provost Rabideau's guidance and in Industrial Outreach under Dr. Joseph McGilberry's leadership.
- Lee stated that this community and MSU have co-existed for many years and he is pleased to report that, thanks to much hard work by many, local elected leadership and others are beginning to better understand MSU's mission and how it contributes to the overall welfare of the community. They are also becoming more sensitive to our recruiting efforts.
- Senator Embree asked Lee what was his attitude toward the *Principals for University Governance* document. Lee responded that, except for two searches, all searches for new positions have followed the spirit and letter of this document. Lee stated that in the cases of the two exceptions, he did not see his efforts as a betrayal of the governance document. Senator Embree then remarked that, if he understands President Lee correctly, the two positions which were exceptions, by their nature lie outside the purview of faculty governance. Lee stated that he read the governance document before he made these appointments and was aware of the full knowledge of its content and its limits. There were other factors relating to these searches which Lee was not comfortable about sharing in a public setting. These factors have nothing to do with the

credentials of the individuals, but are factors with political dimensions that effect the future of this institution. President Lee stated that he will stand by his decisions pertaining to these appointments.

- Senator Montgomery referred to a candidate going through a search committee process which followed the governance document and asked Lee if that wouldn't enhance a candidate's position. Lee responded that in these situations, he felt that what he did was the right thing to do under those circumstances.
- Senator Dunaway asked if when these decisions are made outside the governance document, was there not a provision in the document requesting that the administrator making said appointment to give his reasons. Senator Embree answered by quoting from the governance document "On those extraordinary occasions when the advice of a search committee is not followed, the administrator making the appointment will inform the committee of the reasons that render the proffered advice unwise or impracticable." Embree also quotes an earlier segment of the document saying "The faculty advises the administration through appropriate channels on these matters" and then the documents lists such matters.
- Senator Huddleston asked if we needed to clarify the meaning of the governance document or throw it out or what. In his opinion, the document clearly states that there should have been a search committee and there was not.
- Senator Cathcart stated that he is more concerned about the inferences being made to him at national conferences that MSU is a second rate institution. He doesn't believe this and feels that the statistics show otherwise. He also stated that MSU should jump at every opportunity which comes its way to put itself on the national stage and that these opportunities should make us feel better about ourselves and MSU. Lee responded that this would seem to be the case as evidenced in the change in leadership in MSU's football program.
- Senator Morse stated that in her previous experience with appointed positions, morale plunged among the individuals affected and it was not conducive to approach supervisors with negative opinions. Morse asked Lee since there was no committee search done which would have given him a recommendation, what kinds of systematic procedures did he use to obtain support from the affected unit(s) so that he might know for certain that these unit(s) supported the chosen individual and so that there would not be a lack of morale. Lee responded that there were visits from almost all of the key constituencies within, as well as outside, the university about this position and about this person. Senators Ryan and Stuart spoke in support of President Lee's decision to appoint both of these positions which did not follow the governance document.
- Senator Huddleston asked Lee if he would have been in as strong a position politically, both internal and external to campus, if there had not been a search for a new MSU President conducted by a governance-driven search committee. Lee responded that within the legislature, he would have been in just as strong a position and he feels this to also be the case for Dr. Watson.
- Senator Cinnella asked Lee if he was going to have a search for a director of CAVS. Lee responded that this question needed to be directed to Dr. Pote or Provost Rabideau.
- Senator Embree restated Lee's remark that every 100 students enrolled at MSU generates approximately \$400 thousand dollars and then asked if he had comparable figures as to what those 100 students cost the university and could we not be simply placing a greater strain on the already-existing faculty, facilities, etc. Lee responded

that he does not believe that MSU can currently answer this question, but that SACS, the IHL Board, and other accountability forces are going to require that MSU do a much better job of understanding what its cost structures are in the future. He also feels that Institutional Research is now in a better position to help answer this question in the future. Lee added that another important statistic is to look at what is happening to ACT scores. Senator Embree stated that he hopes faculty will be involved in the process of answering this question so that mistakes will be less likely.

## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

President Diehl's report included the following remarks:

- Diehl introduced two new Senators; Dr. Paul Allen representing MSU Meridian and Denny Eshee returning from sabbatical.
- Diehl referred senators to an OP which was discussed at the November meeting – OP 01.12 Policy and Procedure for Use of Computing and Network Resources at Mississippi State University. Diehl noted that the Senate takes credit for generating a huge improvement in this OP with the addition of an entire section on Privacy.
- The OP on Policy on Use of Copyrighted Works for Education and Research has been given to the Senate for its first reading. This document will not be coming to the Senate, but if Senators have comments about this OP, they should forward those comments to Diehl and he will forward to the appropriate person(s).
- Senator Bryant asked about a quote contained within this OP and Diehl asked that he forward an e-mail to him with the specifics of his question so that he could get the answer.
- Senator Wolverton stated that Mr. Charles Guest, MSU General Council, assisted in the writing of this OP and the committee looked at many other institutions for comparisons of documents.
- Senator Embree asked why the MSU Executive Council was reluctant to send this OP to the Faculty Senate. Diehl responded that he did not know the answer to this, even after pressing the issue with the Council, but he assumes it has to do with expediency. Embree continued that this document seems to deal with creation, discovery, and dissemination of knowledge and isn't this a faculty issue. Diehl responded that this is entirely a faculty issue, but at the moment, this document is not coming before the Senate.
- There are two searches currently in progress, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Vice President for Research.
- The University Faculty Senates Association met yesterday and there are two initiatives: (1) in November, 2003, the UFS sent then Governor-elect Barbour a letter recommending that he appoint a faculty member to the College Board as one of his regular appointees and (2) the UFS will submit a letter to the Governor, Lt. Governor, and the Legislative leadership requesting that they support the restoration of IHL funding and a 12% raise for faculty over three years.
- The Deans Council was not happy with how Fall Break worked at all. Diehl mentioned one proposal that is floating around which would be to add two-days to an October weekend, close the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and work on Labor Day. Diehl took a straw poll and the senators were overwhelmingly against this proposal. Diehl

also asked that if anyone had suggestions about this topic to please forward them to him via e-mail.

### **REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

Vice President Reichert referred to the Senate Vice President's report as distributed and added the following remarks:

- Provost Rabideau stated that he would be submitting a proposal to the Hearin Foundation to develop learning communities at MSU.
- MSU has been discussing the possibility of having a data warehouse where all of the institutional data could be accessed by university personnel. Anyone generating such data would be allowed to contribute to the warehouse. Provost Rabideau stated that he has stopped the development of such a data warehouse citing problems of costs associated with such a system and questions of compatibility with the array of data requested by the IHL Board.
- At the 1-12-04 Deans Council meeting, the Fall Break was discussed. Comments may be sent to Jerry Gilbert.
- The Spring Senate Roundtable will be held on March 27, 2004, at Plymouth Bluff. If senators have suggestions for a roundtable topic, please forward to Reichert. One possible topic that has been suggested is 'excellence in teaching' – how is excellence rewarded, is excellence rewarded, classroom size, etc. Former Roundtable topics and summaries are listed on the Faculty Senate web site.
- Senator Deeds asked if the decision about Fall Break will cycle back to the Senate and, if so, do we have any idea when. Reichert responded that she did not think the Senate would have any other input except via e-mailing comments now. Reichert assumes that the Provost's Office in conjunction with those that are setting up the schedule will make the final decision. President Diehl added that these individuals are making the schedule now.
- Senator Montgomery suggested the topic of outreach for the upcoming Roundtable.

### **REPORT FROM FACULTY SENATE DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES**

**Employee Benefits Committee** – Senator Nebeker referred to the Committee's report as included in the agenda packet with the following additional comments:

- Senator Cinnella asked if the retirement benefit covered retirees before the age of 65 only or after as well. Senator Nebeker stated that it would.
- Senator Cinnella asked if employees who have the optional retirement plan instead of PERS will have some of their premiums diverted in the same manner. Senator Nebeker responded that he was not aware of any discussion about this.
- Senator Huddleston asked Nebeker to follow up on Cinnella's question and Nebeker stated that he would.

### **BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEES**

None.

## **BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEES**

**Letter from Mark Goodman, re: Student Support Services** – Senator Wolverton moved, Senator Dohoney seconded, to refer this issue to committee. The motion passed on a majority voice vote. President Diehl assigned this issue to the Student Affairs Committee.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Senator Morse, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, referred to this Committee's report initiated by a letter from Mr. Josh Blades, Student Association President, requesting a second review of what was formerly known as Resolution 4, which outlined a recommended academic forgiveness policy proposal. Senator Morse moved, Senator Berk seconded, that the Senate endorse the following recommendation:

1. That the revised version of Resolution 4 now known as the Academic Forgiveness Resolution creating an academic forgiveness policy at Mississippi State be supported with the following change:
  - a. The number of hours eligible for this policy should be limited to a total of six undergraduate semester hours.

Senator Berk moved, Senator Wolverton seconded, that the Senate suspend the rules to allow Mr. Richard Heard to speak before the Senate. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Senator Embree offered a friendly amendment to add a section b. to the recommendation which reads:

- b. F's received for academic dishonesty may not be forgiven under this policy.

This was accepted by the committee.

Senator Goodman moved, Senator Wolverton seconded, that the Senate suspend the rules to allow Dr. Jerry Gilbert to speak before the Senate. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

The motion passed on a Senate vote of 25-14-0.

## **POINT OF PRIVILEGE**

Senator Hodge commented that Josh Blades, Richard Heard, and the Student Association did an excellent job of representing themselves and the students of MSU as they campaigned for the academic forgiveness policy.

## **ANCILLARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **CHARTER AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Senator Goodman, Chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, referred to this Committee's report on the draft document written by Dan Embree, Eual Coats, and Ruth Prescott; submitted to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee; and then forwarded to the Senate with the P&T Committee's opinions. Senator Goodman moved, Senator Reichert seconded, that the Senate approve the proposed promotion and tenure document.

President Diehl stated that the existing MSU promotion and tenure document is very specific in terms of what needs to occur in order for the document to be modified. The existing document requires that proposed modifications to the document be submitted to the Faculty Senate in January and be voted on by the Faculty Senate in March, therefore no vote was taken on this motion at this meeting. The discussion focused on questions of fact.

## **STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

No report.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Senator Fowlett moved, Senator Thaxton seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

Submitted for correction and approval.

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LaDonne Delgado, Secretary